

Chapter 2. Coordination and Public Partnering

Coordinating with the public and stakeholders affected by transportation decisions is critical to the success of any transportation planning effort. Planning is the first stage in the development of transportation projects that can have major impacts on communities. As such, it is vital that the public be involved throughout the entire process.

MoveAZ included extensive coordination with regional planning agencies, local elected officials, transportation stakeholders, and the general public. This chapter describes the overall coordination and public partnering process and the links between public partnering and the other phases of the MoveAZ plan.

■ 2.1 Coordination Process

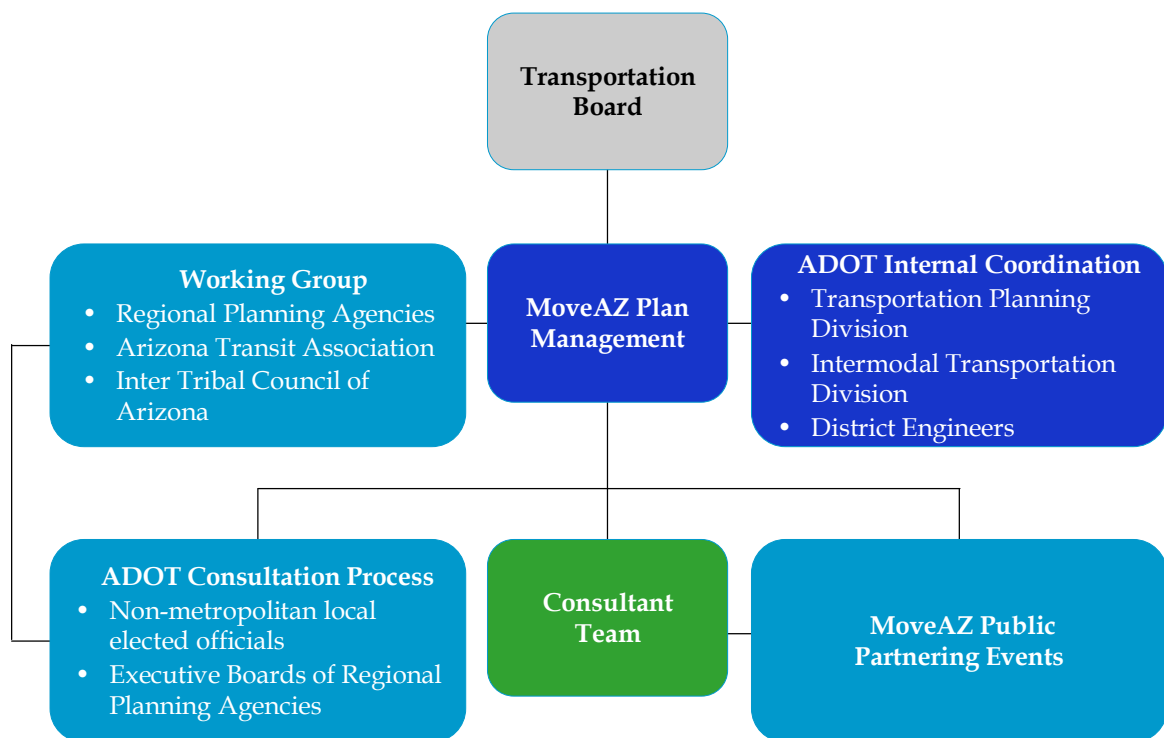
As shown in Figure 2.1, the MoveAZ Plan included extensive coordination within ADOT, between ADOT and other regional and local planning agencies, and between ADOT and the general public. The coordination process included meetings with advisory bodies and other groups. The following four coordination techniques were used to support the MoveAZ plan:

1. **External Coordination** – The Working Group is a body composed of each of the regional planning agencies in the State, the Arizona Transit Association, and the ITCA. This group met throughout the development of MoveAZ and reviewed all material produced for the plan. The Working Group met 15 times between late 2001 and spring of 2004 to review deliverables and provide guidance in the development of the plan.
2. **Internal Coordination** – MoveAZ included internal coordination through two bodies – a steering committee and a continuity team. The steering committee was comprised of Transportation Planning Division (TPD) staff representing planning, programming, air quality, data and asset management, and each of TPD's regional planners. This group met 15 times in coordination with the Working Group meetings described above. The Continuity Team is a body composed of internal ADOT staff (including the ADOT Deputy Director, the state engineer, and a district engineer) and other staff from ADOT's Intermodal Transportation Division. This group helped ensure that MoveAZ was consistent with existing ADOT policy and practice. The Continuity Team met six times over the period beginning in 2002 through spring of

2004 for progress briefings and to ensure coordination of the plan with other ongoing ADOT activities.

3. **Public Partnering** – Fifty public meetings were held across three phases, starting in the fall of 2002 and completing in the spring of 2004. The specific meetings are described in detail in this chapter.
4. **Consultation Process** – ADOT consults with the executive boards of regional planning agencies and other agencies that request information about ADOT planning and other activities. In addition, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires ADOT to consult with non-metropolitan, local-elected officials regarding planning. These activities occur independently of the MoveAZ Plan, but were also used during the MoveAZ process to provide information to these groups. ADOT conducted over 20 meetings with local-elected officials and the boards of regional planning agencies to discuss MoveAZ. These meetings are part of an ongoing coordination process that overlaps the MoveAZ plan.

Figure 2.1 MoveAZ Coordination Process



■ 2.2 Public Partnering Process

Partnering events were opportunities to build stronger partnerships with key public and stakeholder groups. These events were formulated around three key phases of the MoveAZ Plan:

1. The definition of strategic directions, goals, and objectives;
2. The evaluation of alternative policies and projects; and
3. The creation of the draft plan.

Each of the three phases included multiple partnering events, as shown in Table 2.1. The following subsections describe the purpose of each phase and event.

Table 2.1 MoveAZ Public Partnering Events

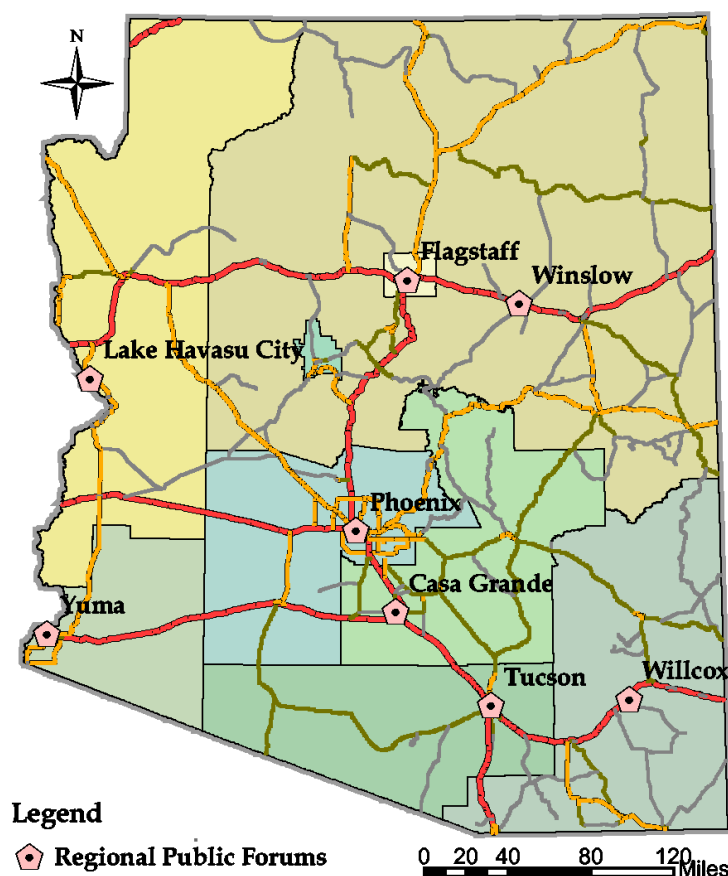
Partnering Phase	Dates	Events
Initial	Fall 2002	Regional Public Forums Focus Groups
Intermediate	Spring 2003	Regional Solutions Forums Focus Groups
Final	Spring 2004	Open Houses

Initial Partnering Events

The initial partnering phase of public involvement provided public input to confirm and refine the strategic direction, and to help prioritize the long-range goals and objectives developed during Phase I. In addition, ADOT gained a greater understanding of the transportation issues facing Arizona through the concerns and suggestions presented by stakeholders and the general public. Two events were held in this phase:

1. **Regional Public Forums**, intended to assess the transportation issues and concerns of the general public (Figure 2.2); and

Figure 2.2 MoveAZ Regional Public Forum Locations



2. **Focus Groups**, providing targeted assessment of the perspectives of specific stakeholders. These groups included:
 - a. Aviation;
 - b. Transit providers and users;
 - c. Bike and pedestrian interests;
 - d. Commercial vehicle operators, railroads, and distribution firms;
 - e. Economic development interests (economic development organizations, industry associations, chambers of commerce);
 - f. Health and human services providers;
 - g. Native American communities;
 - h. Pipeline and utility representatives; and
 - i. Environmental concerns (state and national parks and forest service, air quality planners).

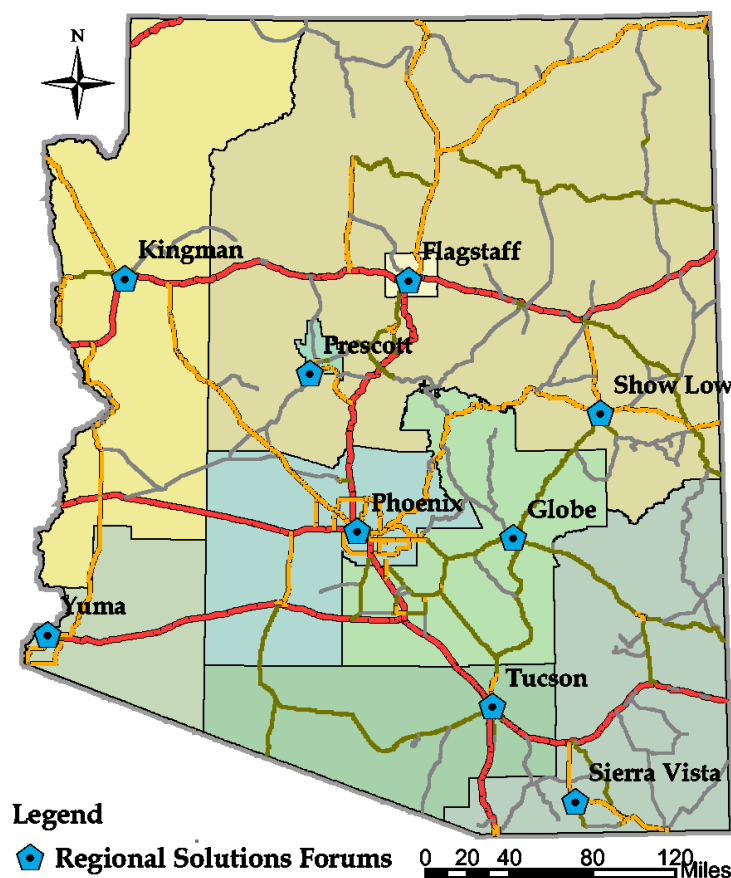
A detailed report describing the initial partnering events can be found in Appendix B.

Intermediate Partnering Events

The intermediate partnering phase was used to evaluate the acceptability of policies and strategies developed in response to issues, concerns, and ideas expressed during the initial partnering phase and as a result of the research completed. The intermediate phase provided additional public input and built a level of confidence to move forward in the development of the draft plan. Nine regional solutions forums were held throughout the State, as shown in Figure 2.3. A second round of stakeholder focus groups was also held with the following groups:

- Native American communities;
- Transit providers and users; and
- Commercial vehicle operators, economic development, and aviation interests.

Figure 2.3 MoveAZ Regional Solutions Forum Locations



The insight gained as a result of the focus groups and forums will be used in discussions and debates regarding potential policies and strategies to improve the performance of the overall system.

The intermediate partnering phase provided important input for the development of weights that were applied in the performance analysis process (described in Chapter 4). Participants at the forums also had the opportunity to identify potential projects and policies for the State's future transportation system. Chapter 3 includes a review of the key policy suggestions received during these and other events.

A detailed report describing the intermediate partnering events can be found in Appendix C.

Final Partnering Events

The final partnering events consisted of 20 open houses held across the State, as shown in Figure 2.4. These events presented material from the draft MoveAZ Plan to the public. From the strategic direction through the analysis of projects, participants had an opportunity to review information about the plan through display boards, copies of MoveAZ documents, and informal discussions with ADOT representatives. The open houses provided a forum to discuss the performance-based analysis process with the public, as well as gauge public response to the overall planning process.

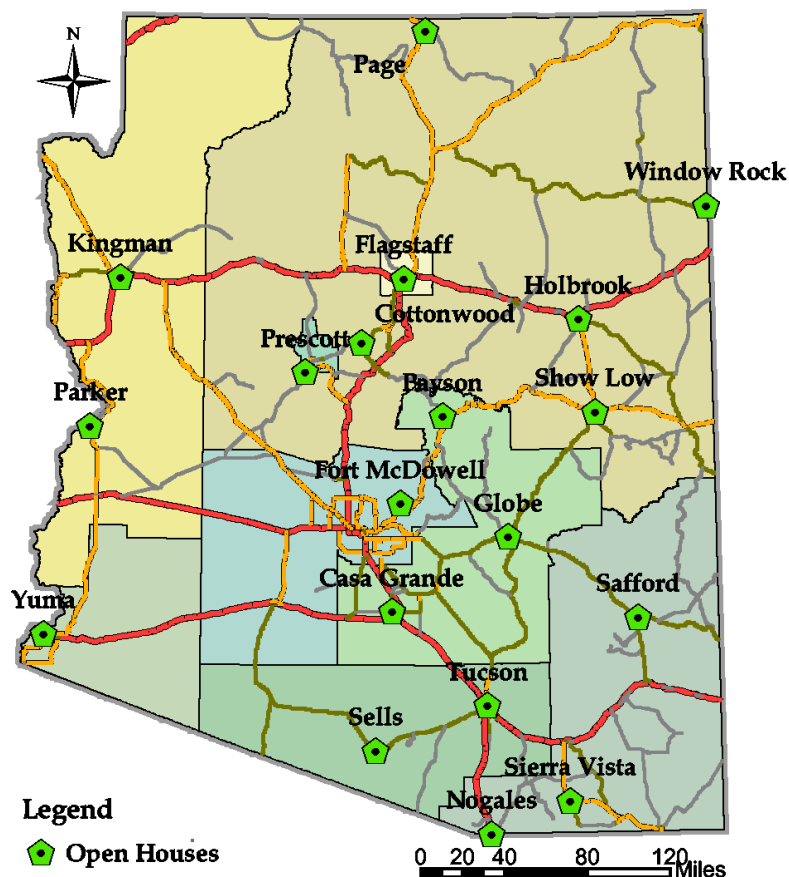
A detailed report describing the final partnering events can be found in Appendix D.

Communication Plan

In addition to the three rounds of public events, MoveAZ included an ongoing communication plan. Regular communication through newsletters, mailings, and a web site provide additional avenues for the public to learn about planning and to comment on MoveAZ. The communication plan included the following strategies:

- **Press releases** were provided to newspapers, chamber of commerce newsletters, radio stations, and other local and regional publications. This provided broad media coverage of the events and a general invitation to the events.
- **Direct mailings** provided an opportunity to specifically invite interested individuals to the public partnering events. Individuals who participated in early events were invited to subsequent events in their area.
- A **brochure** was created to describe the overall purpose of the plan and the basic outline of the strategic direction. This brochure was available at all public partnering events.

Figure 2.4 MoveAZ Open House Locations

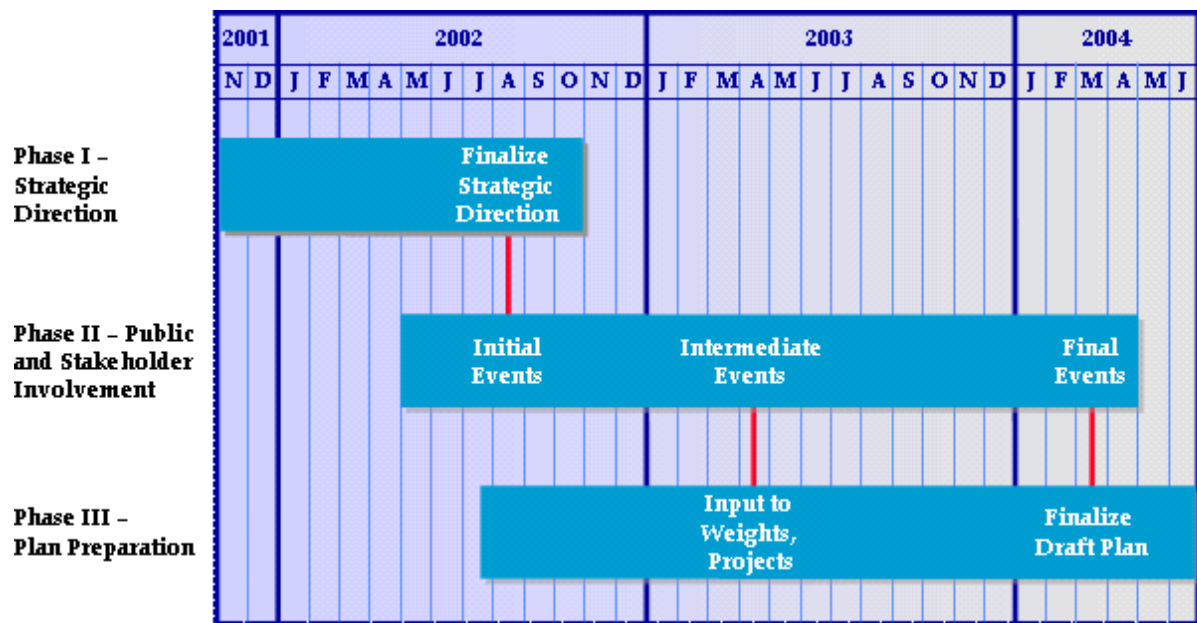


- A **newsletter** was produced to provide information to the public about the plan.
- Finally, a **web site**, <http://www.moveaz.org>, was regularly updated to provide information on the plan to the public. The web site was also the central repository for all planning documents.

■ 2.3 Public Partnering Results

This section describes key results from the public partnering events. These events provided two main benefits: they helped educate the public about transportation planning in Arizona and they helped ADOT understand the general priorities and strategies the public preferred. Each round of public partnering events was intended to inform a particular phase of the MoveAZ Plan, as shown in Figure 2.5.

Figure 2.5 Connections Between Public Partnering and the MoveAZ Plan

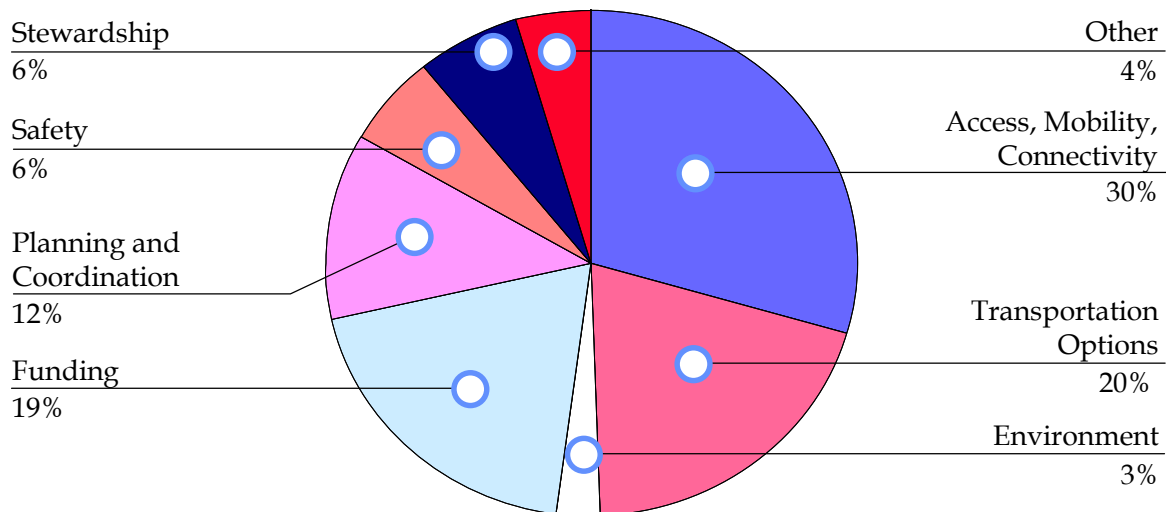


Initial Partnering Results

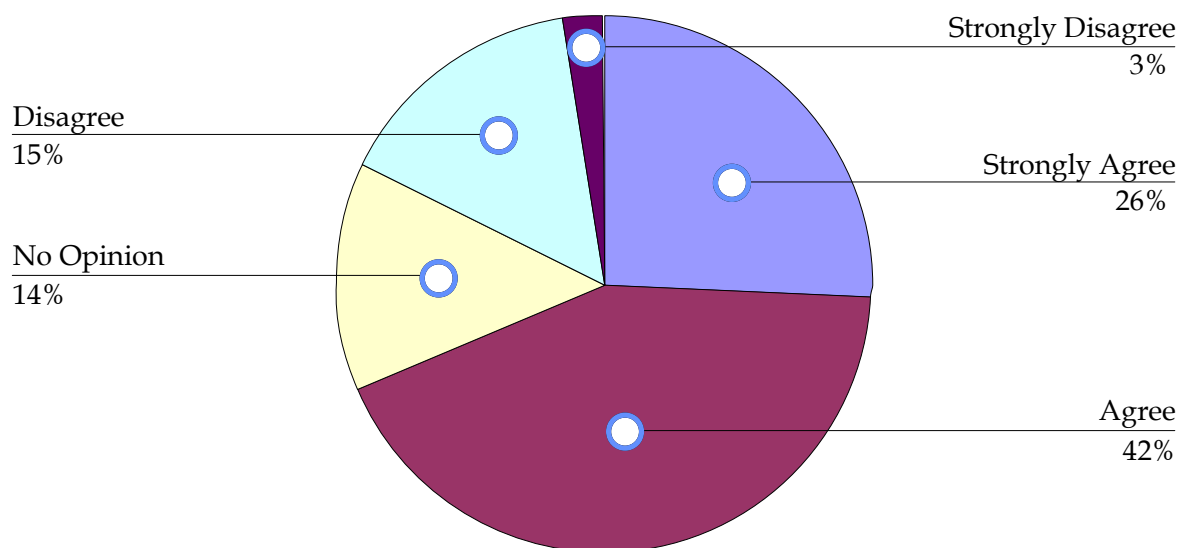
The initial partnering events focused primarily on finalizing the strategic direction. Participants provided information about their best transportation experience, major transportation issues in their region and the State as a whole, and reacted to a preliminary set of long-range goals. In addition to the interactive discussion, each participant received a survey with 15 questions that provided another opportunity for participants to describe their concerns about transportation in Arizona.

As shown in Figure 2.6, comments received during the initial partnering phase reflect many of the long-range goals identified for the plan. Participants also identified issues outside the scope of the plan, such as the availability of funding. In addition, the priorities of Arizonans began to emerge in this first phase. Several of the key concerns expressed in the first phase warrant closer attention.

Mobility was a key issue in the regional public forums and all other events. Arizonans understand that the State is growing rapidly and must address congestion and mobility issues. Similarly, participants at public forums expressed considerable concern about their ability to move easily between major cities.

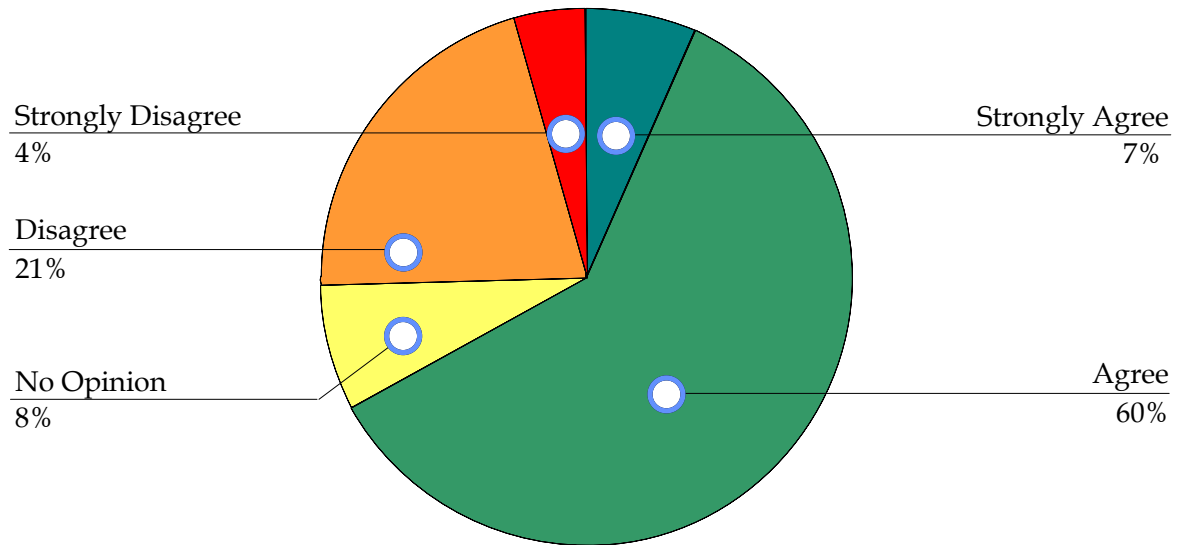
Figure 2.6 Distribution of Participant Concerns Across All Forums

A second major issue that arose in the forums and focus groups was the need for transportation options, such as transit or improved air service. These concerns were spread across several modes and reflected a growing interest in alternatives to the automobile. As shown in Figure 2.7, most participants felt that cities should take the lead in planning and developing transit options. (ADOT's role in transit, air service, and other modes is discussed in detail in Chapter 7.)

Figure 2.7 Response to Survey Statement: "Cities Should Take the Lead in Planning and Developing Transit"

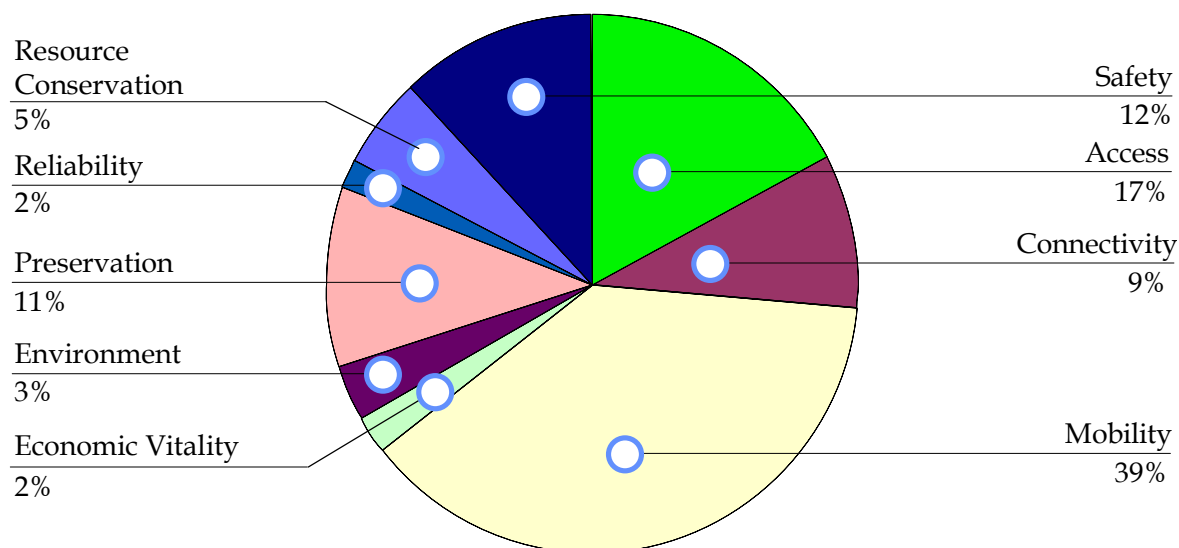
Stewardship and preservation issues were not mentioned as frequently as other issues in the public forums, but this may reflect the existing quality of Arizona's road system. When surveyed about the maintenance of the roads in Arizona, two-thirds of participants believed the system was well maintained (Figure 2.8).

Figure 2.8 Responses to the Statement: “The Overall Maintenance of State Roadways in this Region Is Good”



Intermediate Partnering Results

In the intermediate phase, participants suggested strategies and solutions related to the performance factors that are part of the strategic direction. Participants identified their preferred project and policy solutions through facilitated discussions, and then voted on all comments together. Participant statements were coded by the relevant performance factor, and these results were tabulated to provide a rough understanding of priorities of Arizonans. Strategic recommendations by performance factor are shown in Figure 2.9.

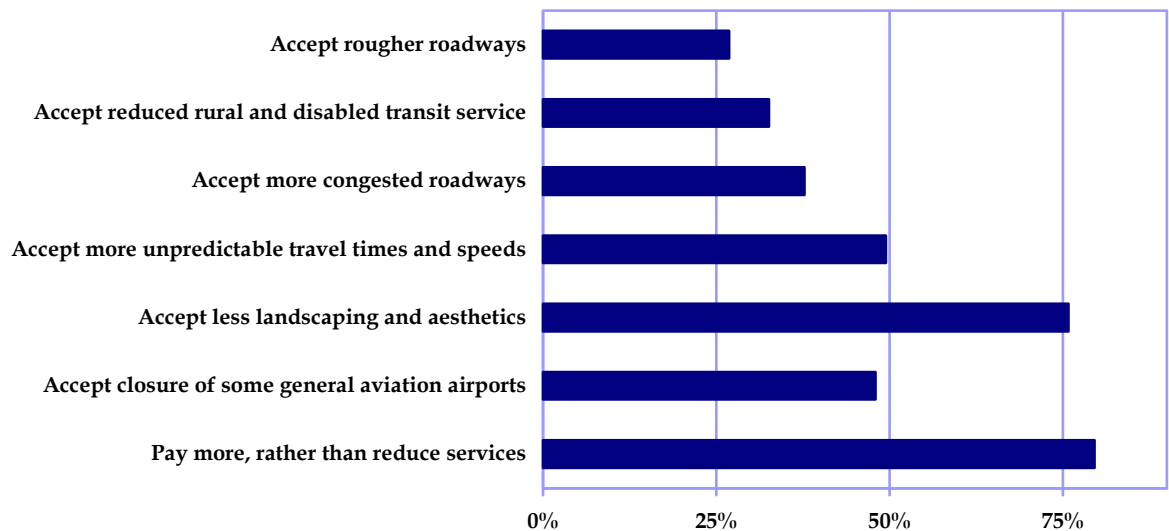
Figure 2.9 Strategic Recommendations by Performance Factor

Source: Cambridge Systematics, Inc., 2003.

The priorities gathered from the regional forums supported the development of performance factor weights. Participant comments suggested that mobility was the primary concern, with other major concerns including accessibility, safety, and preservation. The process for developing weights used participant ranked priorities, as well as information from ADOT and the Transportation Board. Chapter 4 provides a more detailed description of the development of performance factor weights.

To provide additional information about priorities, the regional solutions forums included a survey that asked participants to make tradeoffs between different policy and project solutions. One of the key questions asked what changes participants would most likely accept if less funding were available (Figure 2.10).

Overall, participants were reluctant to accept reductions in services, with over three-quarters of respondents indicating they would prefer to pay more, through taxes or user fees, to retain services and maintain system performance. Funding issues were also frequently raised during facilitated discussions. Policy issues related to funding and other issues are described in detail in Chapter 3.

Figure 2.10 Acceptance of Changes to Transportation Services

Reaction to the Draft Plan

The final partnering phase provided open house participants with an opportunity to react to the draft plan. At the open houses, a series of stations, or booths, were set up to address the various aspects of the plan, including the strategic direction, public partnering, performance-based analysis, and project evaluations. Participants had an opportunity to provide comments at each of the stations, as well as general comments about MoveAZ. In addition, ADOT representatives held informal discussions with open house attendees.

ADOT received over 200 comments at the open houses. Over one-quarter of these comments were made in reference to either the MoveAZ planning process or public involvement process. These comments largely thanked ADOT holding open houses and other events in their communities. Many of the other comments received at the open houses reflected concerns raised during the initial and intermediate partnering events (Figure 2.11). These concerns include the need to pursue multimodal transportation options, such as improved transit and increased air service to rural areas of the State; the need to improve the safety of the state transportation system; and the importance of mobility to support the economic well being of the State and its residents.

Figure 2.11 Primary Subject of Comments Received at MoveAZ Open Houses

